The Common-wealths undoubted Right and Title to the *Stelyard* in *London* truly ſtated in and by the enſuing particulars; Conceived to be worth 2000. l. *per Annum* at the leaſt, beſides Improvements which will amount to a farre higher valuation.

WORCESTER COLLEGE OXFORD

Henry, 3. *Edw.* 1.

IN purſuance and Confirmation of the Conceſſion of Immunities, and Priviledges by King *Hen.* 3. to the Merchants of *Almaine* or *Hanz* Townes in *Germany*; His Son K. *Ed.* 1. granted divers Liberties to the ſaid Merchants.

Edw. 2.

K. *Ed.* 2. Incorporated a Society and Fraternity of the ſaid Merchants, and granted to them *Eaſterling*, or *Guild-hall* of the Teutonicks in *London*.

Edw. 4.

After that, on their preceeding forfeiture of thoſe Priviledges K. *Ed.* 4. Conditionally reſtored and Confirmed to them, and their Succeſſors the ſaid Houſe or Guild, and appropriated to them *Stailhoff* or *Del Court*, cõmonly called the *Steelyard*, with this Proviſo (*inter alia*) That

if they ſhould make an Hanze or Mart in any other City or Place, that they then ſhould be holden Forreigners and Strangers, and have no Priviledge in *England*.

Edw. 6.

About the Fifth yeare of K. *Edw. 6.* Theſe Merchants were queſtioned, and upon Complaints of the Merchant Adventurers of *England*, found it to be no ſufficient Corporation, and to have forfeited their reſtored Liberties, by their colouring Strangers goods, &c. Whereupon (notwithſtanding the interceſſion of the Ambaſſadors from the ſaid Hanz Townes) a Decree of the Councell of State paſſed againſt them, and they became Disfranchized, and deveſted of all former Immunities; and the *Steelyard* was then ſeized into the ſaid Kings hands, as by authentique Records doth appeare.

Q. *Mary.*

After this Seizure of *Edw. 6.* The re-entry and continued reſidence of the ſaid Merchants in the *Steelyard*, muſt neceſſarily be preſumed to have been by an intruſive way and permiſſive ſufferance of them upon ſome *Poviſh* accompt by Q. *Mary*, in the time of whoſe ſhort Raigne, they had nevertheleſs that great Impoſition from One to Twenty, *per Cent.* Cuſtome layd upon them, which occaſioned the beginning of ſuch a Conteſt then, as grew up to that highrned famous difference betwixt Queene *Eliz.* and the ſaid *Hanz* Townes, repreſented to view by Mr. *James Howell*, in the digreſſive fourth Section of his Diſcourſe of the Empire.

Q. *Eliz.*

Q. *Eliz.*

About the yeare of our Lord, 1594. Queen *Elizabeth* cauſed an actuall Seizure to bee made of the *Steelyard*, with all the appurtenances of Tenements, Warehouſes, Wharfes, Keyes, and Buildings, &c. by a judiciall Writ, and appointed the ſame for the immediate uſe and ſervice of her Navie Royall, and the accommodation of divers of the appropriate Officers reſidence thereunto belonging, and dyed ſo ſeized thereof.

K. *James.*

In the time of King *Iames* his Raigne, ſome of theſe interloping Merchants (having upon the Death of Queen *Elizabeth* intruded into the poſſeſſion of the *Steelyard* againe) did by indirect corrupt practices, get favour at Court when they then were Legally queſtioned, ſo that the finall accompliſhing of ſo good and neceſſary a worke was at laſt obſtructed by the ſame Perſon whoſe power promoted it.

K. *Charles.*

In the 8.th yeare of K. *Charles*, a ſtrict Commiſſion of Enquiry paſſed under the Great Seal for finding of the premiſſes, by vertue wherof was returned an Inquiſition on Record in the *Exchequer*, whereby it was accordingly found to be the ſaid Kings rightfull intereſt, which was alſo approved and confirmed under the hands of divers eminent Counſailors at Law, but then alſo unhappily obſtructed by Secretary *Windebank* his being taken off totally to decline both his Maſters, and his owne reall intereſt in the ſaid particular, when a Grant thereof (at his ſole inſtance and ſuite to the King in behalfe of himſelfe and his Friend) had paſſed the Signet in order of courſe to have paſſed the Great Seal of *England*.

The production of authentique Records for proofe of the afferted truthes in this Caſe, will cleerly evidence theſe enſuing Particulars.

1. *That by this* Hanz *Societies ancient diſcontinuation of regular Government of Trade.*

2. *By breach of Agreements and Covenants, in ſcattering, ſtragling and diſperſing themſelves abroad reſorting to other Marts of Staple erected in ſeverall places beyond the Seas.*

3. *By ſundry Forfeitures under the Conditions of their ancient Grants from the Crowne.*

4. *ly, and Laſtly, By their actuall relinquiſhment of the* Steelyard *expreſly appearing on Record.*

It is humbly conceived to be fully evinced, That their old Fraternity and incorporated Society, by degrees, long ſince ſurceaſed, and became utterly diſſolved in fact, as viſibly it now remaineth; And now thereby alſo is become the Commonwealths Right.

MARM: MARSHALL.

Some

Some obſervable Notes referring to the truth and merit of the preceding ſtate of the Caſe of the Steelyard, *in tendencie to the taking it off from being reckoned matter of State upon any publique accompt, being indeed cleerly a plaine and legall Title, and that fully on behalfe of the Common-wealth.*

1 THe ancient Trade of Merchants of the *Hanz* here in *England*, and alſo of the Merchants of the Entercourſe of the *Netherlands*, was overtopp'd, eat out, and ſupplanted by the politique rules of Government, and orderly management of the Trade of the ancient and famous Fellowſhip of the Merchants Adventurers of *England*, who were impowred by Charters granted from time to time by the Princes of this Realme, and favoured by Parliaments ſucceſſively.

2. The advantages of Publique u'ility accrewing to this Nation in thoſe times, by increaſe of Shipping and Mariners, Advance of publique Revenue, in improvement of Lands and Rents, and imployment for the Poore, hath ſince been leſſened and abated to a diſcontinuation of the happie flouriſhing condition of this Nation, by the decaies of Trade accompanied with ſad effects of declination of all thoſe conveniences and benefits, which are the immediate conſequences of an equall, Free, open, yet regular way of Commerce for the good of Community: When the Commodity of ſome few is preferred to the publique good, needs muſt the Common-wealth be deprived of that

true Liberty of free Trade which belongeth to all the Subjects, and relates to the Nations peculiar Priviledges not to be infringed by the too severe practique strictness of any Company of Merchants by authority of Patents under the Great Seal only, without consent, and confirmation of Parliament.

3. To the Intrudors usuall, ordinary plea, and averment of our Merchants enjoying higher Priviledges in *Hambrough*, then they doe here; It is humbly replied, that notwithstanding the Staple of our *English* Cloth is at *Hambrough* within the precincts of the *Hanz*; yet that settlement is of no relating concernment to the incorporated body of those *German* Townes, or to the Intruders here at the *Steelyard*, who have not of a long time negotiated in transporting our Cloth, but solely and singly referring to *Hambrough*, as it is continued to be owned there for reciprocall advantage and profit mutually participated; where our Merchants in reference to the Staple of our Cloth, may, and ought to have some Priviledges upon that accompt, but in other regards doe, and must pay for what they have in that, and all places where they come; having indeed no pretence to Immunities, or Claime of priviledges within the precincts of the *Hanz*, much lesse to intrude and usurpe upon any such as might be equivalently suitable to what these interloping Strangers, have so long time injuriously held, and still detaine to make use of in *England*, for private selfe-ends to the Nations publique loss and dishonour, and generall spoyle of Trade.

4. A paralell Case unto this of the *Steelyard* in point of forfeiture of Priviledge, is that of K *Hen.* 8. who going to marry *Anne* Daughter to the Duke of *Cleveland*, and approaching neare the Towne of *Amorsford* in the

Nether-

Netherlands, was met by the Burgers of the ſaid Towne, who cauſed the high-way to the Kings deſigned Lodgings to be ſpread with Red broad Cloth; for which their reſpect ſhowed, the King by Grant under the Great Seale, made the Burgers of the ſaid Towne, Denizens and Freemen of *London*; In token wherof all the Ships of *Amerſford* carry the *red Croſſe* and *Dagger* in their Flags to this day: But this great Priviledge by their abuſe of it, in colouring the goods of other Townes and Cities, was by them loſt; And in 1640. there was 5000. l. by them profered to have the ſaid Graunt renued.

5. It is obſervable, That when this *Hanz* Society was here in its greateſt height of Trade (even when they held this Realme as it were, beholding unto them for their Shipping, daring to offer ſome hoſtility in the time of *Edw.* 4. for deniall of ſome demanded Priviledges) there were not then above 6000. Clothes by them tranſported hence into *Germany* yearly, vended at low prizes; whereas our Merchants increaſed that number to 30000. Clothes yearly by them tranſported in *Engliſh* bottomes, and ſold at great prizes.

6. Eminently memorable to the Honour of the ſaid Merchant Adventurers, and farre above what the uſeleſs Fraternity of the ſaid *Hanz* could ever pretend unto, was the ſervice they did this State in the year 1588. Supplying the Navie Royall with a Ships lading of Powder and Shot from *Hambrough*, which came in by divine Providence in that point of time, when there was extreame want thereof.

7. Remarkable is this alſo, That the *Hanz* Townes have been from time to time, and ſtill continue ſubjected under neceſſary obligations of renuing ſolemne proteſts of Fealty to the Houſe of *Auſtria*.

8. It

8. It is further considerable, in reference to the Common-wealths interest, That the Intruders at the *Steelyard* assisted and seconded by some Merchants of the Entercourse of the *Netherlands*, and others their Confederates, made an humble address to the Parliament, or so reputed, Sitting in 1657. under the pretence of their assumed Priviledges, that they might bee totally disburthened of the Demands or payments of any publique Taxes, contributions, or Assessments for the States service; And then pleaded a Treaty of 300. yeares old, betwixt this State and the Duke of *Burgundy*, but the said Parliament layd it aside and gave liberty to the City to levie Taxes there; And notwithstanding that they are Thousands of pounds in arreare upon that accompt; yet to this day doe they peremptorily deny to be liable to pay any such Assessments.

9. These few Forreigners by confederacy and combination with others, have too frequently been inabled to work prejudice to this Nation, made even a prey to their boundless Avarice, incroachments, and rapine, and do still ceaslesly endevour to perpetuate the like designes by the subtle interpositions, and frivolous objections and allegations of their adherents and abettors, unto all which (if a wel-grounded true and rationall accompt be but admitted and Councell heard) the result will amount to no more in the close then this; That the Law, hath been, and is clearly held against them, and will be so maintained against all imaginable opposition or defence, the whole matter being already made out by authentique Records and other sufficient prooses.

Marm: Marshall.